

Doc. No. 191From M.M. Litvinov's Diary

Extracts from the

Record of the Talk with Mr. Shigemitsu,
Japanese Ambassador in Moscow, of July 28, 1938

SHIGEMITSU: On July 11, the Soviet troops unexpectedly occupied the Chang-glu-Feng district west of Lake Chang-Ghi and began to fortify it. In view of this Charge d'Affaires Nishi made a protest to Mr. Stomonyakov and demanded that an immediate evacuation of the Soviet troops from that district be effected. Stomonyakov declared the protest groundless and declined it on the basis of the Khunchun agreement and the maps attached to it.

On having studied the question the Imperial Government wired me and instructed to state the following:

According to the data founded on the agreements between China and Russia, the border is established in this region and likewise according to the data of the Zarist regime which are at the disposal of the Manchurian Government this territory belongs to Manchukuo. Besides, in the Khunchun agreement mentioned by Mr. Stomonyakov, it is said, that from letter "T" the frontier line runs north-west, follows the line of the mountains on the western side of Lake Khassan, and reaches the northern end of the sandy ridge, etc.

Therefore it is clear that the western coast of Lake Chang-Chi forms the border.

The fact that the Manchurian population have their religious rites on this mountain is another proof of this area being Manchoukuo possession.

It follows from the above that there is no doubt whatsoever that the territory belongs to Manchoukuo and the Japanese army in virtue of its obligations to Manchoukuo might take measures ensuing from these obligations

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LITVINOV: During his conversation with NISHI, STOMONYAKOV presented quite official documents, i.e., the Khunchun Agreement and the maps attached to it.

The frontier on those maps is defined quite clearly, and the maps are signed by the Chinese representatives. On this map the frontier runs west of Lake Khassan, which you call Chang-Chi. It seems to me that the

presentation of these documents should have put an end to all sorts of talk on the subject, and I was glad to learn from the Ambassador that the Japanese-Manchurian party had studied all the documents and I expected to learn from him that the Japanese-Manchurian party had come to the same, i.e., the only possible conclusion, that the lake and the adjacent hills belong to the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, the Japanese government insists upon its previous incorrect viewpoint. The Ambassador has mentioned certain data, yet he did not say what data were meant by him.

He has mentioned certain religious rites which cannot be checked upon by anybody. We know and have always considered the hill in question to be on the Soviet side of the frontier. Our border guards always discharged their duties there. Therefore we must categorically decline every protest and demand, because we are dealing with the Soviet territory, and no claims on it of another power are acceptable.

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".....The Ambassador has mentioned certain data, that are at the disposal of both parties. We presented our data to the Japanese Embassy represented by NISHI. I am ready to present them also to the Ambassador. If the Japanese party produce their data, we are willing to study them, but so far we have only heard unfounded statements and groundless demands.

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SHIGEMITSU: My opinion is that the Japanese government will not be satisfied with your reply. Firstly, you are speaking about the map as serving as a legal basis of the argument, but the map, which Mr. Stomonyakov showed to NISHI, had never been published, and, to my mind, at this critical moment speaking of some map is unreasonable. This will only complicate matters.

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LITVINOV: I must say I am greatly surprised at hearing you, an old and experienced diplomat, speaking so slightly about official maps and calling them "some maps". You must know that maps are the only means of establishing frontiers.

SHIGEMITSU: "...Japan has the rights and obligations to Manchoukuo to use force and make the Soviet troops evacuate from the territory of Manchoukuo, unlawfully occupied by them.

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LITVINOV: The Ambassador has not said anything new. The only new thing was that he threatened us with the use of force. The Ambassador

evidently considers the tactics of threats a sound diplomatic means. Unfortunately, there is quite a number of countries that are susceptible to being frightened and threatened, but the Ambassador must know that this means cannot be successfully used in Moscow.

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Signed: LITVINOV

The copy is correct:

Director of the State Central Historic Record Office of the USSR.

Professor V.Maksakov.

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION OF EXCERPTS OF THE ABOVE DOCUMENT:

I, KAPLAN V., hereby certify that I am thoroughly conversant with the Russian and English languages; and the above is a correct and true translation of the indicated excerpts of the above document.

Signature: /s/ V.Kaplan
V.KAPLAN

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Signature: /s/ V. Kaplan
V. KAPLAN

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lt. Colonel TARANENKO G. I., a member
of the military forces of the U.S.S.R., do hereby certify
that extract from the record of the talk of Litvinov and
Srigemitsu on July 20, 1938 in Moscow concerning the
Krassen Lake incident, on 10 sheets
was delivered to me by the Central State Historical Records
Office of the U.S.S.R. on or about 13 March, 1946,
and that the original of the said document may be found in
the Central State Historical records office of the USSR in
Moscow.

I do further certify _____

/s/ TARANENKO

Lt. Col. T. TARANENKO
(Signature and rank.)

Tokyo, Japan

June 24, 1946,